

STATE SENATOR • DEBORAH CHERRY • 26TH DISTRICT

Cherry Press Release

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CHERRY CALLS FOR REFORMS IN ABSENTEE VOTING

(LANSING) – State Senator Deborah Cherry (D-Burton) reintroduced a voter registration bill to the Senate after it stalled in committee last year. She is hopeful this important issue will be addressed this legislative session.

The bill would allow first-time voters to vote by absentee ballot. State law currently prohibits first-time voters from voting absentee and requires the address on the voter registration card to match the address on a driver's license or State I.D. card. This especially affects college students who live on campus and cannot return to their hometowns to vote.

"We should be doing everything we can to encourage our constituents to vote, whether it is in person or by mail," Sen. Cherry said. "Every willing and able citizen should be given the opportunity to participate in the process."

Last fall, Sen. Cherry joined Senators Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) and Virgil Bernero (D-Lansing) in a campaign to repeal the law that prevents students from voting in campus precincts unless both their driver's licenses and voter registration cards indicate the same permanent residence. Under a law passed in 2000, citizens' addresses on driver's licenses and voter registration must agree, making voting more difficult for thousands of college students living away from home.

Sen. Cherry supports less restrictive voting and will work this legislative session to open up the process to all who want to participate.

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Sen. Deborah Cherry is a first-term Democrat from Burton, Michigan. She serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee, where she sits on the Higher Education, Department of Community Health, Department of Natural Resources and Capital Outlay subcommittees.